Lebrury

MINEHEAD URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH'S REPORT FOR 1953.

The Registrar General's figure for the population of the town is 7,333 the figure for 1952 being 7,237; for 1951, 7,339, and for 1950, 7,331. It is probable that during the summer holidays this figure is more than doubled. the seasonal increase usually commences in June and continues until September. There are also minor variations at Easter and Christmas. The large majority of the hotels, boarding houses and apartments close down for the winter months. The health of the community during the year was satisfactory.

Vital Statistics.

Total. M. F.
Live Births - Legitimate 74 34 40
Illegitimate 2 1

Birth Rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population 10.3

Total. M. F. 109 56 53

Death Rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population 14.8

Death Rate of Infants under one year of age :- All infants per 1,000 live births :- 26.3

Water Supply.

This has been satisfactory throughout the year. The quantity was at all times sufficient to meet the demand. The main supply from Nutscale Reservoir with subsidiary supplies from Broadwood, Longwood, Longcombe and Periton caused no anxiety at any time. The quality of the water supply to the town is satisfactory; 30 samples of raw water were sent for analysis; of these 5 were not in all respects satisfactory. Of the 13 samples of treated water only 1 was not in all respects satisfactory. The chemical analysis of the water was satisfactory. No action was at any time called for respecting contamination and none was taken.

Certain structural alterations connected with the water 'supply are at present being undertaken at Nutscale Reservoir.

Swimming Pools.

There is one swimming pool situated on the sea front which is privately owned. This pool is filled with sea water which undergoes chlorination before being admitted to the pool. The filtration and chlorination plant are under skilled management and the engineer is on duty the whole of the time the bath is in operation. Frequent testing indicates that the water carried the necessary amount of residual chlorine to ensure a safe bathing water. Samples submitted from time to time were all found to be satisfactory.

Sewage Disposal.

The whole of the Urban District is served by a sewage disposal system.

The whole of the sewage system is under review and has been considered by the Council during the period under discussion and previously. Meantime no steps have as yet been decided on to deal with the problem, but the matter becomes more urgent year by year as more houses are built and linked up with the existing sewers. The storm water is also on the increase as more and more surface drains are directed into the sewers.



The matter of the outfall in connection with the tides and the resultant fouling of the beach is still an unsolved problem. No major alterations in the sewage system are at present decided upon. A small extension of the sewers at Periton has been undertaken.

Practically all the houses in the district are served by water-closet accommodation, only 16 are not so gerved. Of these, 12 are pail closets and 4 earth closets.

The public cleansing is done by direct labour. This also refers to the removal of house refuse. The collection is made weekly. A special scheme for the collection of trade refuse is operated. All the refuse is disposed of at the tip controlled by the Council servants.

Foods.

No outbreaks of food poisoning have been reported during the year.

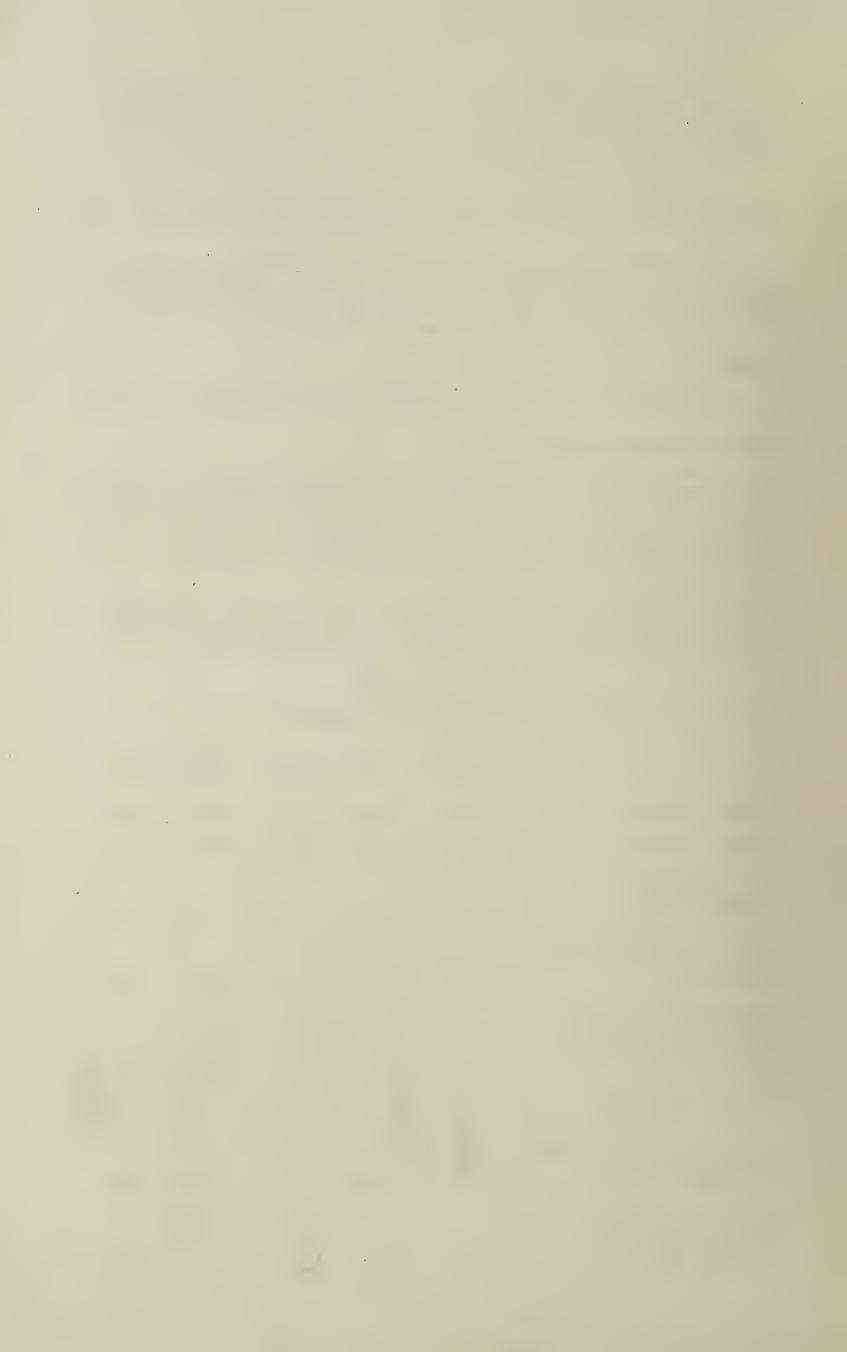
Meat and other Foods.

Meat is prepared for human food at the Minehead Abattoir from where it is distributed throughout the districts of Minehead, Watchet, Williton and Dulverton. So far as is practical all animals are inspected before slaughter, and all carcases and offal are inspected in accordance with instructions laid down in Memo. 62 Foods, and appropriate action taken where required.

All places where food is prepared, etc., including the Abattoir, shops, stalls and vehicles, are inspected from time to time and action taken as required. Generally the cleanliness of these establishments and vehicles is satisfactory.

Meat Inspection 1953. Carcases Inspected and Condemned.

	Cattle excluding cows	g Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs
Number killed	904	333	513	6268	1413
Number inspected	904	333	513	6268	1413
All diseases except Tuberculosis Whole Carcases	0	12	6	49	12
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned.	656	376	5	285	60
Percentage of number inspected affected with disease other than tuberculosis	64.16	67.26	1.95	6.31	4.74
Tuberculosis only Whole carcases	1	5	2	0	0
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	62	89	0	0	161
Percentage of the number inspected affected with tuberculosis	5•31	18.02	•39	0	9•55



Milk.

The milk supply during the year was satisfactorily maintained. Samples taken from time to time that did not come up to the required standard were investiged and the cause ascertained and remedied.

The total number of Registered Distributors was 3. The total number of Registered Dairy Premises was 3. The number of supplementary licences issued to distributors whose dairy is outside this area was Nil. (a) (b)

(c)

Manufacture of Ice Cream.

The regulations governing this manufacture and the requirements implicit in them have tended to restrict the preparation of ice cream to the large wholesale houses. The distributors find it more profitable to purchase their ice cream in bulk.

Fifteen samples of ice cream submitted for examination during the summer showed that the bulk of the ice cream was of a relatively high grade.

Housing.

The total number of houses is 2,406. 25 houses were erected during the year; 11 by the Local Authority and 14 by private enterprise. 31 houses were in course of erection at the close of the year.

119 houses are reported as unsatisfactory in that two families are occupying the same house. This figure includes a number of persons living in furnished rooms.

The total number of applicants for Council Houses at the end of the year was 183.

The number of Post War houses erected up to the 31st December, 1953 was :-

By Private Enterprise 45

Four houses were condemned under the Housing Act as being totally unfit. Closing orders were made prior to 1953.

Factories Act.

The Register of Factories is now complete and the Form 572 relating to inspections and defects, is attached to this report.

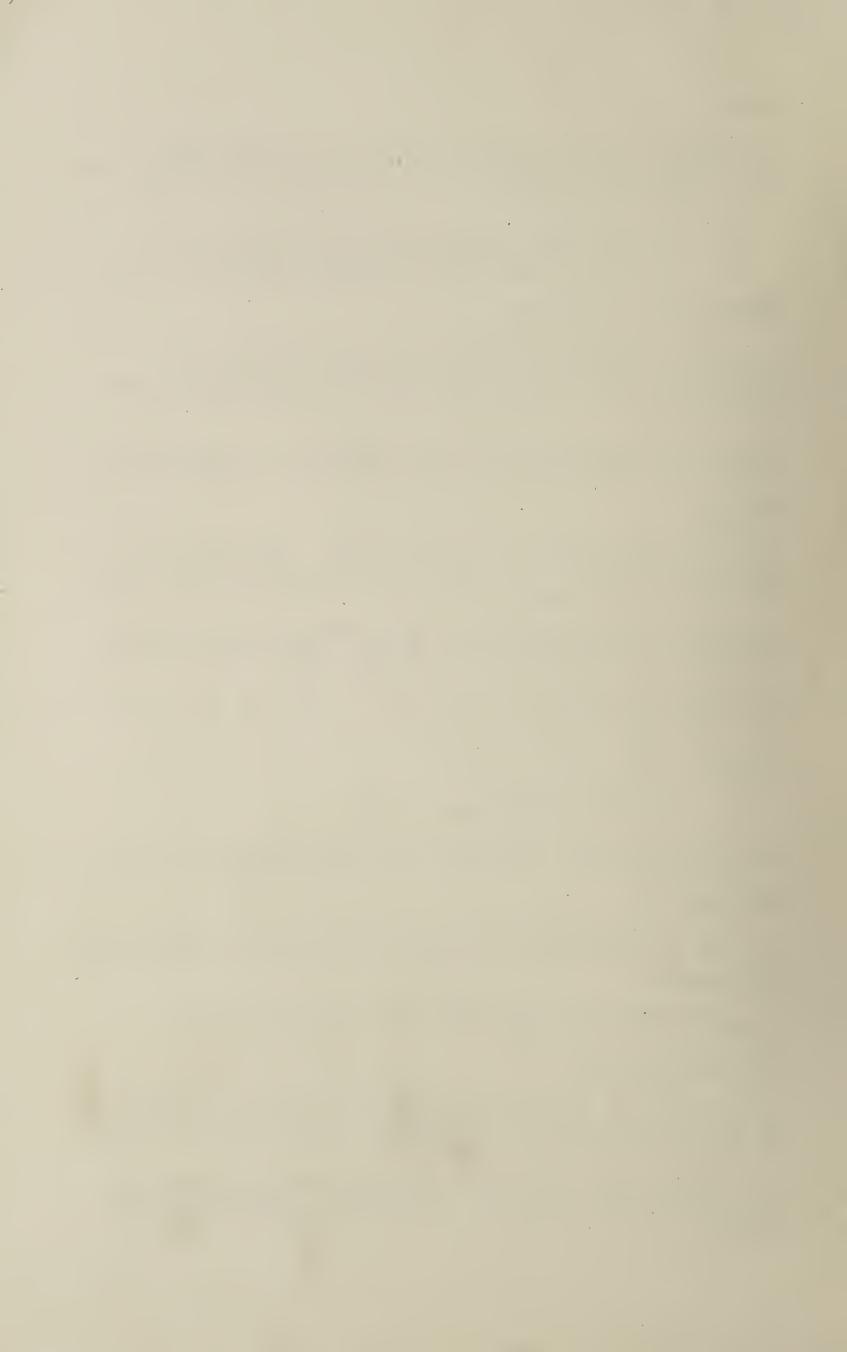
Overcrowding.

Five cases of overcrowding were reported and were satisfactorily dealt with.

Infectious Diseases.

An epidewic of whooping cough occurred which affected the town and the surrounding country. 105 cases were notified in the Minehead area, but the bulk of the cases were of a very mild type. There were no deaths. mild type.

Sporadic cases of other notifiable diseases were reported from time to time. One case of paralytic poliomyelitis was notified from the town and admitted to the Isolation Hospital at Taunton.



Cases requiring institutional isolation are sent to Taunton Isolation Hospital.

Disinfection of premises after infectios disease is carried out by the Local Authority, also after cases of an unhygienic or unpleasant nature.

Tuberculosis.

There were 4 new cases of tuberculosis notified. There were 3 deaths.

Hospital.

The Minehead and West Somerset Hospital is entirely administered by the Bridgwater, Minehead and Butleigh Management Committee.

Local representation in the management of the Hospital exists in the House Committee of the Hospital, on which the town is represented. This Committee is responsible for the day to day supervision of the Institution and is empowered to make recommendations and representations to the Committee of Management. The Committee of Management is represented on the Committee by three of its members.

Ambulance Services.

During the year under review the ambulance services vested by the Ministry in the County Council have been carried out by the St. John Ambulance Brigade to the entire satisfaction of the community. Under the arrangement with the County Council the cost of the running and maintenance of the ambulances is the concern of the County Council. Three ambulances and two sitting case cars are based on the St. John Ambulance Headquarters and five full-time trained ambulance drivers are maintained. The remainder of the Service, which includes all night work, is carried out by the local ambulance and nursing divisions. This part of the Service is entirely voluntary and maintained with the financial support of the general public.

Clinics.

Clinics, with the exception of Infant Welfare, are now held at the Minehead and West Somerset Hospital.

Vital Statistics.

An analysis of the vital statistice shows that the total deaths registered were 109; in 1952 the number was 108.

The total live births were 76 compared with 74 the previous year.

With regard to the deaths occurring in age groups, 69 occurred over the age of 70, and of these 34 occurred between 70 and 80; 27 between 80 and 90 and 8 at 90 or over. It would seem that of the 109 deaths only 40 failed to reach the three score years and ten.

Nothing startling emerges from the consideration of the cause of death. Diseases of the circulatory system provide the highest number of deaths, 48, an increase of 5 on last year. Of these 16 were due to coronary disease of the heart, an increase of 6. Deaths due to vascular lesions of the nervous system were 17, a decrease of 6. There were no deaths attributable to the acute specific fevers. The total number of deaths from malignant disease of all organs was 15. There were only 4 deaths due to respiratory disease.

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Perhaps the most noticeable feature in this paragraph is the increase in the number of deaths due to coronary disease of the heart. The reason is probably to be found in the accelerated pace of modern life and the increased stress and strain entailed therein.

It will be seen that only 40 deaths occurred under the age of 70 and of the remaining 69, 35 occurred over the age of 80.

As will be seen from consideration of the various items making up this report the health of the town remains satisfactory.

The town and the surrounding country suffered from a major epidemic of whooping cough, but it is satisfactory to record that no deaths resulted. Only one case of Poliomyelitis was notified and was isolated at the Taunton Isolation Hospital.

Occasional sporadic cases of other infectious diseases occurred from time to time.

The erection of new houses has continued roughly at the same rate as the previous year, the proportion of houses erected by private enterprise being in excess of those erected by the Local Authority.

The two major services in the maintenance of the health of the town remain to be brought into line with the requirements of a modern health resort, namely the water supply and the sewage disposal. These have been dealt with under separate headings in this report. The water supply is adequate and the main storage sufficient and efficient. The distribution, owing to the unequal growth of the town at its various levels, has given rise to various problems which are receiving your attention.

The sewage disposal is a matter which should receive your attention as the urgency will increase year by year as the town continues to develop.

I should like to close with an appreciation of the Council's co-operation and patience in dealing with the matters that I have brought before them, and to my colleagues in its service my thanks for their courtesy, and help in all those matters concerning the public health.

W. BAIN.

M.B., B.S., Lond., Medical Officer of Health.

September, 1954.

